

## THE GLOBAL WAR ON TERROR AND ARMY OFFICER MILITARY EDUCATION

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USAWC CLASS OF 2008

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Report Documentation Page			Form Approved OMB No. 0704-0188		
Public reporting burden for the collection of information is estimated to average 1 hour per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to Washington Headquarters Services, Directorate for Information Operations and Reports, 1215 Jefferson Davis Highway, Suite 1204, Arlington VA 22202-4302. Respondents should be aware that notwithstanding any other provision of law, no person shall be subject to a penalty for failing to comply with a collection of information if it does not display a currently valid OMB control number.					
1. REPORT DATE <b>15 MAR 2008</b>		2. REPORT TYPE <b>Strategy Research Project</b>		3. DATES COVERED <b>00-00-2007 to 00-00-2008</b>	
4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE <b>Global War on Terror and Army Officer Military Education</b>			5a. CONTRACT NUMBER		
			5b. GRANT NUMBER		
			5c. PROGRAM ELEMENT NUMBER		
6. AUTHOR(S) <b>Joseph Martin</b>			5d. PROJECT NUMBER		
			5e. TASK NUMBER		
			5f. WORK UNIT NUMBER		
7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) <b>U.S. Army War College ,122 Forbes Ave.,Carlisle,PA,17013-5220</b>			8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER		
9. SPONSORING/MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)			10. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S ACRONYM(S)		
			11. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S REPORT NUMBER(S)		
12. DISTRIBUTION/AVAILABILITY STATEMENT <b>Approved for public release; distribution unlimited</b>					
13. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES					
14. ABSTRACT <b>See attached</b>					
15. SUBJECT TERMS					
16. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF:			17. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT <b>Same as Report (SAR)</b>	18. NUMBER OF PAGES <b>30</b>	19a. NAME OF RESPONSIBLE PERSON
a. REPORT <b>unclassified</b>	b. ABSTRACT <b>unclassified</b>	c. THIS PAGE <b>unclassified</b>			

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USAWC STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT

**THE GLOBAL WAR ON TERROR AND ARMY OFFICER MILITARY EDUCATION**

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## **ABSTRACT**

AUTHOR: Colonel Joseph M. Martin

TITLE: The Global War on Terror and Army Officer Military Education

FORMAT: Strategy Research Project

DATE: 25 March 2008      WORD COUNT: 6,268      PAGES: 30

KEY TERMS: Contract Instructors, Captains Career Course, Intermediate Level Education, Full Spectrum Force

CLASSIFICATION: Unclassified

Officer Professional Military Education (PME) has been a part of Army officer development since 1794. Today the Army dedicates between 2.5 and 3 years to Army resourced education for each successful career officer. This investment is huge and sets the Army and the Department of Defense apart from most of their counterparts in the civilian world. Unfortunately, history and current trends have demonstrated that the Army's selfless culture has struggled to meet long term educational goals during periods of high operational demand like the present. This paper will examine the impact of the Global War on Terror (GWOT) on officer PME. Specifically, it will demonstrate that current Army officer culture and PME policies may not be effectively guiding the Army toward its officer education strategic objectives. In order to change the culture, the Army must consider the potential benefits of modifying current policy in order to influence behavior. Several policy and curriculum modification recommendations are provided as a means to reverse the identified trend and resultant concerns.



## THE GLOBAL WAR ON TERROR AND ARMY OFFICER MILITARY EDUCATION

Officer Professional Military Education (PME) has been a part of Army officer development since 1794.<sup>1</sup> Today the Army dedicates between 2.5 and 3 years to Army resourced education for each successful career officer.<sup>2</sup> This investment is huge and sets the Army and the Department of Defense apart from most of their counterparts in the civilian world. Unfortunately, history and current trends have demonstrated that the Army has struggled to meet long-term educational goals during periods of high operational demand like the present. The purpose of this paper is highlight the impact of the Global War on Terror (GWOT) on officer PME. I will accomplish this by providing a short history of Army officer PME, then illustrate the impacts of GWOT on officer PME. I will argue that current Army officer PME policies and curriculums may not be effectively guiding the Army toward its officer education strategic objectives. Finally, I will make several recommendations to mitigate identified concerns or deficiencies.

### A Short History of Army Officer Education

The history of Army Education has demonstrated a continuous search and evolution towards a program that would prepare officers for the next fight, resources permitting. Since 1794, the United States Army has utilized institutional schools to train officers in their basic branch competencies. However, the schooling was not universal and far from systematic.<sup>3</sup> Starting with the Corps of Engineers, then spreading to the more technical branches like Field Artillery, each branch focused on intra-branch competencies with no association to the other branches.<sup>4</sup> This stovepipe-like approach to education continued during the 19<sup>th</sup> Century with the exception of the Civil War when all schools ceased to operate. After the Civil War, General William T. Sherman led an



initiative to develop a systematic and universal officer education system yielding limited results.<sup>5</sup> As a result of deficiencies noted in the Spanish American War, Secretary of War Elihu Root led a series of reforms that would eventually establish a more systematic approach to Army officer education.<sup>6</sup> The National Defense Act of 1920 provided the legal mandate to resource and institutionalize these changes.<sup>7</sup> Elihu Root's vision to create a system of progressive schools designed to integrate officer formal education yielded a more comprehensive junior officer education program, the inception of the Command and General Staff College and the Army War College.

The interwar years provided the Army a limited opportunity to focus officer schooling towards the future. Between World War I and World War II, the Army improved the school curriculums based on the lessons learned from World War I and a vision towards what warfare would look like in the future. Several tactical innovations were developed in the branch schools.<sup>8</sup> These new warfighting techniques would eventually benefit the Army during World War II. Additionally, several field grade officers benefited from a two-year education program at Fort Leavenworth that thoroughly explored the operational art.<sup>9</sup> Many of these officers eventually served at the General Officer level during World War II. At this point in time, the Army education system was favoring future preparedness over unit readiness.<sup>10</sup> Despite the improvements, school attendance was not compulsory so the increase in the officer corps educational development was only as good as the number of officers who actually attended the schools.

World War II changed the Army school system dramatically. During World War II, the Command and General Staff College was closed and junior officer education

consisted of short core competency-focused courses to train a limited number of officers on the skills they would need to survive in combat. Rightfully, these decisions were a byproduct of focusing resources on the warfight itself. Unfortunately, this dilemma of meeting current operational demands over preparing the officer corps for the future would continue to plague the Army throughout the later half of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century and beyond.

Since World War II, the Army has attempted to establish a formal educational system that maintains an emphasis on future preparation with limited results. The Army leadership has directed 13 separate boards to determine the right educational needs for the officer corps.<sup>11</sup> From the Gerow Board of 1945 to the Officer Personnel Management System (OPMS) XXI Board of 1996, the Army has studied and implemented recommendations to improve officer education. Several dramatic improvements have resulted from these recommendations such as an emphasis on teaching officers how to think rather than what to think, the institutionalization of officer basic training and the centralization of schools under the United States Army Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) as well as the Combined Arms Command.<sup>12</sup> However, resource constraints limited the growth and benefit of many improvements. During the post-Vietnam and post-Desert Storm eras, the Army was forced to constrain monetary resources while downsizing. Since the end of the Cold War, the Army experienced an unprecedented increase in OPTEMPO resulting from deployments, thus limiting available manpower resources. In order to meet the ever-increasing operational demands of the Army, General Shinseki made a decision in 1999 to fill all deployable divisions to 100% strength.<sup>13</sup> This decision coupled with congressional legislation

mandating manning levels for Active Component Reserve Component (ACRC) assignment levels further strained the pool of Army officers available to man officer education cadre billets. As the Army closed out the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, it remained torn between feeding an ever-increasing operational demand while making due with officer education.

From 2000 to present, the Army has continued efforts to improve officer education in a constrained resource environment. In June 2000, General Shinseki directed TRADOC to convene the Army Training and Leadership Development Panel (ATLDP) to review, assess and provide recommendations for developing and training 21<sup>st</sup> century leaders.<sup>14</sup> Not long before the eve of September 11, 2001, the ATLDP made two revealing observations regarding the Army's Officer Education System (OES). First, the officers of the Army perceived that the Army's OES did not educate officers in the skills they need for full spectrum operations.<sup>15</sup> Secondly, the Army's under-resourced OES did not reflect the actual needs of the Army.<sup>16</sup> In essence the board was stating that the Army's OES actions were not in line with its vision of training officers for the future.

Consequently, the Army convened a Leader Development and Education Task Force (LDETF) that produced a Training and Leader Development Strategy (ADTLS) to guide resourcing decisions. Several improvements implemented to date are the creation of the Basic Officer Leadership Course (BOLC) centralized basic officer training approach, a modified Captains Career Course (CCC) providing combined arms training to all captains and a universal Intermediate Level Education (ILE) course that is available to all officers regardless of previous performance.<sup>17</sup> Unfortunately, these developments were conceived in an ever-increasing deployment OPTEMPO

environment. The previously-highlighted manpower requirements combined with the OPTEMPO associated with the global war on terror have stifled the Army's ability to mitigate the deficiencies identified by the ADTLP.

In short, the Army culture has demonstrated over time that it will act in favor of accomplishing the current mission at hand at the cost of future professional development. The Army enjoys a reputation derived from a culture based on selfless service to the nation.<sup>18</sup> The Army's commitment to supporting operational requirements such as the reconstruction of Iraq and Afghanistan while simultaneously transforming into a modular force is a testament to its dedication to "be there" for the nation now and in the future. However, this commitment comes with a price. With each additional pledge to the present, the Army limits its resources to build for the future. The resultant demands of GWOT and transformation may place the Army in a position where it will have to choose between one or the other. The results of the ATLDP may be a vanguard of that very dilemma.

### The Heart of the Matter – Personnel

Resourcing quality PME is heavily dependent upon manning; for now and the immediate future, our Army is struggling to sufficiently man the generating force (the institutional Army). In the 1990s, the Army instituted a fair-share officer personnel distribution system called the Officer Distribution Plan (ODP).<sup>19</sup> This non-prioritized system enabled the United States Total Army Personnel Command (PERSCOM) and the rest of the Army to manage personnel utilizing a common operating picture. Although providing predictability and minimizing friction between commands, the ODP hid a very important detail – that the Army had more documented commissioned officer

positions than it had people to fill them. The increase in expeditionary requirements following the Cold War forced the Army to prioritize its requirements in favor of the operating force (warfighting portion of the Army). This is why General Shinsecki mandated 100 percent manning in the deploying divisions in 1999. This decision combined with statutory manning requirements and the Army's desire to fill selected organizations such as West Point faculty at 100% has diverted personnel resources away from the generating force. The GWOT would only further complicate this condition.

Since 2001, the Army has consumed incredible amounts of manpower to support GWOT. The expeditionary nature of the Army has required it to formally prioritize requirements. As of the summer of 2007, the United States Army Human Resources Command (HRC) Officer Personnel Management Directorate's (OPMD) three Army manning priorities are to support Army requirements, followed by officer professional development followed by officer preference.<sup>20</sup> The subordinate priorities of Army requirements are to support the deployed or deploying expeditionary forces, followed by Army transformation, then Army manning guidance, and finally law and policy requirements.<sup>21</sup> The task of supporting the warfight coupled with supporting Army transformation has been daunting, but achievable.

Unfortunately, the emphasis on the operating force has further strained the Army's ability to properly man the generating force. This year, the officer inventory is over 3500 personnel short of the requirements to man the force as it exists on manning documentation.<sup>22</sup> These shortages principally reside in the grades of Major and Captain. Exacerbating the situation, the Army directly fills approximately 1000

additional *undocumented* positions that directly support the war fight like the Transition Teams (TT) and Joint Manning Document (JMD) requirements. With the above manning priorities, the Army is able to fill its warfighting education institutions to a level somewhere between the 55<sup>th</sup> and 91st percentile depending on the command.<sup>23</sup> Further, the institutional Army is one of the larger recipients of JMD taskers which temporarily deploy individual augmentees away from their institutional assignment to fill Worldwide Individual Augmentation System (WIAS) GWOT requirements. In other words, our schools may be 55-91% on their books, but the personnel situation is actually worse than that when you subtract out these augmentees. Until the deployment requirements decrease, the Army will be executing one of its most important priorities, officer education, with much less than a full complement of instructors.

### Contractor Support

In order to support the warfight, the Army has had to look elsewhere to support the manning needs of the institutional Army and, more importantly, the schools. In order to rectify active commissioned officer shortages, TRADOC has outsourced several civilian contractors to teach many of the Army's officer core education courses. Some examples of these contractors are the small group instructors at ILE, assistant professors of military science, and technical instructors in the BOLC III portion of officer basic. Although this measure may rectify immediate manning concerns, it may create some undesirable second and third order effects.

The policy of utilizing contractors to fill institutional Army instructor billets creates additional inventory strains on the officer corps. The Army has imposed certain entry

standards for the contract instructors to facilitate initial instructor competence and credibility.<sup>24</sup> Typically, candidates must be retired military personnel who meet height and weight standards as well as many other requirements. To meet these specifications, the outsource company must seek candidates from the officer pool, the same pool that is almost 4500 personnel short of filling current manning requirements. In order to attract candidates, outsourcing companies offer financial incentives to lure career military officers away from the force prematurely. Some would argue that one retiree filling one position is a zero-sum gain. However, this is not the case when the Army has to tell an officer that he will change station to another operational assignment because there are no institutional Army slots available and the operating force needs to fill a vacancy resulting from a recent officer retirement. I have seen this situation first-hand while serving in the personnel community. There are other concerns with contractors filling traditional core Army competencies.

Over time, the contractor military instructor corps' credibility may suffer from a lack of relevancy and ability to appropriately teach military technical expert knowledge. Research has indicated military-technical competence is the Army's core expertise and thus should remain under the jurisdiction of the Army.<sup>25</sup> As stated earlier, officers learn over a lifetime of service through many means. It is reasonable to assume that a recent retiree can teach an Army doctrine based curriculum. It is also reasonable to assume that the recent retiree has all of the skills and experience to aptly draw on personal experience to reinforce the learning objectives in the curriculum. However, the Army's current operating environment is continuously evolving, creating leadership nuances worth sharing in officer education, particularly within direct and organizational leader

development. Just spend an hour teaching a group of ROTC cadets or ILE students who have been serving in the institutional Army for three years and they will ask how what they are learning will apply to them as a leader in today's Army. These students will ask the question, "What is it like out there right now in the real Army?" A retiree or any officer for that matter with recent operational experience can answer this question confidently and with a great deal of credibility. However, it is worth noting that the leadership instructor's credibility will likely decrease when he can no longer confidently reflect on a recent operational experience. This relevancy and credibility atrophy can potentially dilute contractor instructor impact in the future and is thus worthy of consideration. Specifically, it would be prudent to determine if there is a threshold of contract-instructor irrelevancy and when it occurs. If so, it would be equally wise to develop a method to renew instructor operational experience. In order to maintain legitimacy and ensure effectiveness, the Army should study the future impact of the above concerns and develop strategies to mitigate them if necessary.

#### Delivering a Competent Full Spectrum Force Officer

Producing a competent full spectrum officer corps may be beyond the capability of today's Army's educational institutions. As AR 350-1 states,

The goal of the OES is to produce a corps of leaders who are fully competent in technical, tactical, and leadership skills, knowledge, and experience; are knowledgeable of how the Army runs; are prepared to operate in a joint, integrated and multinational environments; demonstrate confidence, integrity, critical judgment, and responsibility; can operate in an environment of complexity, ambiguity, and rapid change; can build effective teams amid organizational and technological change; and can adapt to and solve problems creatively.<sup>26</sup>

This daunting 78 word sentence encapsulates the Army's desired capstone attributes of each graduate from the Army's education system. Army education takes place in three



domains: formal instruction at the service schools, operational assignments, and self-study.<sup>27</sup> The intent is that each officer attends a school to learn a skill set to prepare them for the next assignment where they will hone and increase their skill sets through experiential learning and self-development. The overarching question is whether or not that model will deliver a competent full spectrum leader with the necessary skills to be successful in their next assignment.

There have been several changes to BOLC III resulting from the GWOT and Army transformation. In armor branch alone, 30% of the newly commissioned graduates find themselves in combat NLT 60 days after their graduation.<sup>28</sup> Additionally, each year, TRADOC sponsors a conference designed to determine the necessary ratio between tasks taught in the domain of BOLC and the domain of the first operational assignment. The operational units have recently requested that the BOLC curriculum covers over 90% of the tasks leaving less than 10% to the unit. This is in stark contrast to a previous 60% BOLC to 40% unit traditional balance.<sup>29</sup> These changes have required the Armor center to increase a 5 day Program of Instruction (POI) to a 6.1 day POI with 24 days in the field vice the traditional 10 days.<sup>30</sup> Fortunately, the operational Army and the graduates are confident with the BOLC education process. The increases in instruction have prepared each graduate to utilize a skill that is equally applicable in stability operations. Furthermore, the skill set for a platoon leader is essentially the same for the offense and defense operations which are the mainstay of Major Combat Operations (MCO). However, the increases in instruction have also increased the OPTEMPO on an instructor corps that is undermanned and looking for an opportunity to spend some time with their families in the generating force cadre. Although not a trend

as of yet, another great question to ponder is whether or not the new lieutenants will arrive at their first assignment burnt out as a result of an ambitious, but necessary, BOLC curriculum.

There have been changes to the environment of the Captain's Career Course instruction resulting from the GWOT. Before the GWOT, lieutenants would learn the rudiments of company-level maneuver under the auspices of their company and battalion commander during their first operational assignment. The distributed nature of stability operations rarely, if ever, demand collective maneuver at the company level. Consequently, officers are reporting to the CCC with limited company maneuver experience.<sup>31</sup> Despite a thorough familiarity with stability operations resulting from one or more deployments, the CCC students are only vaguely familiar, at best, with the science and art of synchronizing combat power in a Major Combat Operations (MCO) environment. Exacerbating the situation, Fort Knox is also starting to receive CCC instructors who also lack MCO experience. This condition has required the Maneuver Captains Career Course to execute a more robust curriculum that includes exercises in both stability and MCO operations. The length of the CCC has remained essentially unchanged since the beginning of the GWOT. The students are amazingly adaptable but graduate feeling that they are the "jack of all trades, but the master of none".<sup>32</sup> The question is whether or not this increase in the volume of instruction will impact officer performance in the future.

Another interesting trend is that the Army is struggling to fill CCC seats. Recently the CSA, GEN George Casey, published a memo that included a powerful statement:

The pace of operations present commanders with the dilemma of either meeting current operational and training demands, or taking training and

operational risk to allow leaders to attend PME. Many commanders mitigate the risk by deferring PME. Although understandable, taking care of soldiers in the long term will be accomplished by sending leaders to PME.<sup>33</sup>

This statement is a result, in part, of an observed change in culture regarding the declining propensity of the junior officers to attend CCC. In 2006, the Army was able to fill only 83.66% of its allocated CCC slots and in 2007, the fill rate dropped to 79.80%.<sup>34</sup> For FY08, the Army decreased the number of allocations for CCC seats by over 12%.<sup>35</sup> This growing body of evidence indicating a decreasing propensity to school the future company commanders has garnered the attention of the Army Staff.<sup>36</sup> The question is whether or not this trend will continue and what will the impact be on the future senior leaders in the Army.

The Army is working to decrease an ILE backlog that is a consequence of the previously-mentioned universal attendance policy and a current lack of resources to fill resident seats for all the associated students. According to the Human Resources Command (HRC), the ILE backlog consists of 2,145 officers.<sup>37</sup> Depending on the size of the cohort, the Army must send between 1,062 to 1,263 officers to ILE each year in order to break even.<sup>38</sup> Currently, the Army does not possess the resources (students available to PCS to school) to fill enough seats to decrease, let alone maintain, the backlog.<sup>39</sup> Additionally, there are 130 officers who have been selected for LTC who have not attended ILE because there is no regulatory or promotion board instruction requirement for them to attend the course.<sup>40</sup> Regardless, there is still a strong reason to eliminate the backlog because the National Defense Act of 2005 has mandated that a pre-requisite for Senior Staff College is the successful graduation from Joint

Professional Military Education (JPME) level I which is only available through an ILE education.<sup>41</sup>

In order to decrease the ILE backlog, the Department of the Army has recently adopted a policy allowing not more than one-third of the affected officers to complete an alternative ILE curriculum. Specifically, the officer attends a four-month Common Core (CC) course at one of the four satellite/blended learning courses (outside of Fort Leavenworth) and then finishes the Advanced Officer Warfighting Course (AOWC) via distance learning in an 18 month period.<sup>42</sup> Although a feasible option to mitigate the backlog, the impact of this new curriculum is unknown at this time. The Army should carefully monitor whether or not the distance learning AOWC course provides the same quality education of the resident course as well as the officer graduate and unit satisfaction with this curriculum.

Lastly, the question remains as to whether the current design of Captain and Major PME curriculums meets the needs of the current and future force. The length of CCC and ILE have not changed substantially since 2001. The intent of CCC is to provide Captains the skills to lead a company and successfully serve on a battalion and brigade staff.<sup>43</sup> The ILE prepares field grade officers for command and staff positions at the battalion, brigade and division level.<sup>44</sup> However, the distributed nature of operations in GWOT has shifted responsibilities for key decisions in volatile, complex, ambiguous and uncertain environments down to new levels. As GEN George Casey stated, “today’s leaders are making critical decisions on the battlefield that only a decade ago were reserved for senior officers and NCOs.”<sup>45</sup> The question is whether or not a four-month CCC followed by a ten-month ILE education can produce competent leaders for current

and future battlefields. The Army will need to carefully study these concerns to determine whether or not a major change to one or both curriculums is in order.

### The Premium of Operational Experience

The Army's premium on operational experience may undermine its ability to achieve its strategic developmental objectives. The strategic objective of the Army's OES transformation is to create an educational system that is relevant to the current force, but structured to the future force as well. Several Army GWOT related decisions may impact that education system.

The Army culture is a summary of its policy actions and the individual and collective behavior that results from those actions. At least two major policy actions have favored the importance of an operational assignment over the importance of a professional education. First and foremost, the centralized board selection process clearly favors operational assignments. In a crosswalk of 8 different sets of board instructions from promotion and battalion command boards, I was unable to find any significant reference to the importance of formal PME.<sup>46</sup> Each board instruction did articulate the desired qualities akin to those previously cited in this paper followed by a paragraph discussing the importance of operational assignments and how experience matters.<sup>47</sup> Secondly, the Army's manning guidance to fill the needs of the operational force first is an intuitively obvious illustration of its bias towards the operating force and, to some extent, a conflict with the CSA's recent memorandum regarding PME. In a time of war where the Army is the principal bill payer for the surge, both policies seem reasonable. However, these policies change behavior. Officers read board instructions and base their career decisions on them. Commanders mentor their subordinates

based on what the leadership of the Army is stating and, more importantly, doing. Will there be undesirable second and third order effects that the Army will have to tend to in the future?

As Army training policy implies and the CSA states, operational experience is a part of officer's PME and not a substitute for it. Anyone who has experienced reflective and critical thinking in a purely academic adult learning environment cannot argue against the potential benefits of that environment. It is distinctly different than the on-the-job experience that one receives while going about the daily business of serving in the operational Army. General of the Army, Dwight Eisenhower, stated in his address to the Armed Forces Staff College,

Sometime before the war between the States, Stonewall Jackson resigned from the Army. He gave as his reason that he was seeking time to think about his profession. One of the functions that our service schools provide us is to give us that opportunity.<sup>48</sup>

It is important to keep in mind that PME is one of the unique characteristics that sets the military apart from most of its civilian contemporary organizations. In an environment of persistent conflict, with an ever-evolving world situation, a transforming Army cannot afford to risk the appropriate PME of its future leaders to meet the current operational needs of the force.

### Future Strategic Considerations

As in the past, the Army is looking forward by executing a strategy to mitigate identified PME deficiencies. The current pre-decisional Army Training and Leadership Development Strategy (ATLDS) outlines 10 overarching goals to improve training and leadership development.<sup>49</sup> Of those goals, four directly affect officer PME. Many of the objectives of the goals are outstanding, showing promise to improve officer PME. The

following are the officer PME related objectives associated with the goal of developing adaptive and competent leaders:<sup>50</sup>

- Adapt OES, Non-Commissioned Officer Education System (NCOES), and Civilian Education System (CES) to support an expeditionary Army during a period of persistent conflict by the end of FY10.
- Implement the broadening educational opportunities to prepare Army leaders to assume senior-level leadership in joint assignments, and be able to work effectively with partners in unified action by the end of FY09.
- Establish training and education policies necessary to support an expeditionary Army at war by the end of FY09.
- Reduce PME backlog by 90% by the end of FY14.
- Establish procedures and systems to monitor and adjust training requirements in the operational, institutional, and self-development training and leader development domains to ensure leaders are educated and trained for full spectrum of operations by the end of FY10.

In order to realize the benefits of these objectives, however, the Army will need to make some fairly significant policy changes and potentially reprioritize resources. The question is whether or not the resulting policies changes will be sufficient to change the culture.

The Army is also working to institutionalize leader training that can adapt to the future operational environment changes.<sup>51</sup> This goal is ambitious because it requires dynamic curricula development that is resource intensive. Typically, the instructors who teach are responsible for changing curriculums. This task may be too demanding for

the already undermanned instructor corps in the Army's schools. Therefore, to successfully accomplish the goal the Army may need to reprioritize resources to improve schoolhouse instructor manning rates.

Lastly, the Army is working to develop a strategy to deliver leaders who can "leverage language and culture to accomplish military objectives."<sup>52</sup> Specifically, the Army's strategy must address how to train those leaders in the force and all future leader accessions. There are two noteworthy difficulties the Army will face in achieving this objective. First, this training will also need to be adaptive if the strategy is going to stand up to the test of time. The Army may be required to fight in a different environment than the Middle East so the training must be able to change with a new environment. As previously argued, adaptive training requires additional resources in order to maintain pace with changes. Secondly, the leaders currently in the force will need to receive the training somewhere outside the operational assignment domain. Considering the current volume of instruction in the BOLC and CCC curriculums, providing additional cultural and language training may actually decrease the effectiveness of these courses. Consequently, the Army may need to reevaluate BOLC and CCC course lengths or create an additional venue for cultural and language training.

### Recommendations

In order to provide a solution to the potential problems above, the Army will need to continue to study all new and existing policies with a goal of determining future impacts. The stakes at risk include the Army's legitimacy, its jurisdiction over a very unique body of abstract knowledge, its reputation of selfless service to the Nation and,



most importantly, the future intellectual capital of the institution's leadership. If the Army is serious about changing culture (the actions of the officers throughout the ranks), then it will have to ensure that the policies in place guide the officer corps toward a unifying objective. In other words, if PME is important, then the Army must institute policies that underscore the importance of PME.

#### Mandatory Education Attendance

The Army should consider codifying education gates at each rank by mandating the appropriate level of education as a pre-requisite for promotion to the next grade. Despite a clear reference to the need and importance for PME at each respective grade, the Department of the Army (DA) centralized selection board instructions fail to specifically mandate graduation from the appropriate level of PME as a pre-requisite for promotion. The Army should consider adding a paragraph to each set of promotion board instructions that mandates PME as a pre-requisite for promotion. For example, the FY08 Lieutenant Colonel Army Board instructions should include a paragraph explaining the importance of attending ILE and that attending ILE is a pre-requisite for competing for promotion to lieutenant colonel. This policy will drive HRC assignment actions HRC and, most importantly, the behavior of the officer corps.

#### Modify CCC Curriculum

The Army should consider changing the structure of CCC to better prepare the company grade officers for future service in a full spectrum force<sup>53</sup>. As previously argued, the complexity of today's operational environment is more demanding on the junior leadership of the Army. Currently, the DA board instructions for selection to major provide the board members a description of the attributes of a multi-skilled leader.

Many of the attributes are easily developed through the course of a first operational assignment and the attendance of a 4-6 month CCC. However, attributes such as, “skilled in governance, statesmanship and diplomacy; and knowledgeable in cultural context with the ability to work across it” may be beyond the PME available to our Captains.<sup>54</sup> Twenty-four years ago, then COL Hubba Was de Czege argued that the Army’s field grade officers needed an opportunity to increase their studies of the operational art from one to two years.<sup>55</sup> Through his efforts, the Army instituted the Studies in Advanced Military Arts (SAMS) program. It is time for the Army to consider a change in Captain PME as well.

The Army should increase the length of CCC to accommodate more time for the institutional Army to educate students in a broader spectrum of activities that will benefit the officers and the Army as a whole. First, provide the students an opportunity to review their experiences to date by preparing a personal experience monograph as well as participate in Center for Army Lessons Learned (CALL) seminars. This portion of the course teaches critical and reflective thinking to the students and captures some vital information for the Army to utilize in doctrine development. Second, provide the students a series of electives designed to review atrophied warfighting skills that they had not effectively practiced since attending BOLC. For an armor officer, good examples would be MCO and gunnery training skills. Both of these skills are rarely, if at all, exercised during a typical assignment in today’s mechanized Army because most of the mechanized forces are in, coming from or preparing to go to Iraq. Obviously, the options will differ depending on the branch, but each one could benefit from this opportunity. Third, teach a thorough warfighting curriculum on full spectrum operations

including historical and doctrinal study complemented by multiple exercises to reinforce the learning objectives. In order to do this appropriately, the cadre will need to be empowered to modify the curriculum as necessary to properly conduct after-action reviews and retraining. The intent for this portion is a pure warfighting study isolated away from the distractions associated with a typical curriculum. Finally, provide each student the opportunity to obtain a Master's Degree in a discipline related to social sciences, language or humanities. Optimally, this should be an isolated event with few, or limited, distractions. Anyone who has earned a Master's Degree "on their own time" understands how difficult it is to fully benefit from the education while doing some other activity. The above four phases would comprise the new CCC curriculum. In total, the program would last approximately 18-24 months.

The benefits of the new CCC curriculum above would be numerous. First, the program teaches skills like critical and creative thinking that the Army typically teaches at grades above Captain. Second, the Army would benefit dramatically from the lessons derived from the student's reflections on their experiences. Third, each student and the Army would benefit from perspectives provided by an additional civilian education degree. Fourth, the review portion of the course would minimize warfighting skill atrophy. Fifth, the 2-4 combat stripe wearing students could take the time to get married or reinforce their relationship with their family. This is tough to do in an action-packed 4-6 month curriculum. Sixth, executing this program with Captains vice Majors enables the Army to fill any resultant manning vacancies in less time because it takes 5 years to produce a CCC student as compared to 9 years to produce an ILE student. Finally, the program would make a strong statement regarding the importance of

educating officers by making a huge investment in the intellectual development of the junior officer corps.

#### Universal Resident ILE Attendance

The Army should mandate universal resident ILE attendance. As the previously cited Dwight Eisenhower quote implies, officers need time to think about their profession. No matter how expedient a modified ILE curriculum utilizing a temporary-duty (TDY) CC and a distance learning AOWC may sound, it cannot be as effective as a 10 month resident course. Temporary duty implies that the student has left his or her duty position vacant while going to school. This is nothing more than an unfair shell game where the student's responsibilities are placed on the shoulder of another officer. Additionally, the student is distracted by the thought of what is going on while he or she is gone. Further, distance learning translates to getting yourself a quality education while you go about your normal duties in your assignment. Both phases of the course essentially delegate the responsibility of prioritizing human resources from the Army to the local commander. If universal resident ILE attendance is not achievable, then the Army must make the tough decision to change policy and reinstitute the ILE selection board. Anything short of universal resident attendance or a selection process undermines the importance of the ILE education.

#### Contract Instructors

The challenge is how to bridge an officer personnel and instructor shortage with competent, relevant and credible personnel. The operating force needs officers to fill critical war fighting billets. The generating force needs personnel with relevant combat experience. The Army should study a change to the current instructor outsourcing

policy that requires contract instructors to periodically recertify their operational and deployment experience. The Army's current retiree recall program policy supports this change through providing opportunities for retirees to return to active duty to fill critical warfighting billets in the Army. This opportunity provides the contract instructors a venue to recertify their relevancy while increasing their time on active duty and the improvements of retirement benefits as well. One drawback to this change is that it would initially create additional vacancies in the instructor pool. However, any loss to the instructor pool (retiree) goes back to the operating force (as a retiree recall) and will return back to the instructor pool eventually (as a retiree). Although this is not a perfect win-win for both sides, it definitely provides potential for improvement to officer inventory, contract instructor professionalism and the potential relevancy gap in the instructor pool.

### Conclusion

Since its beginning, the Army has invested heavily in improving its officer education programs. However, the culture of selfless service to the nation and immediate operational needs have consistently required the Army to choose between superior officer PME and something that is just good enough. At this time, the Army is fully engaged as the main billpayer for the GWOT while transforming to a structure that will serve it well in the future. The officer manning resource deficiency will not dramatically improve in the near future. However, tomorrow's strategic leaders are growing up in the Army today, and the Army must underscore the importance preparing those senior leaders for the complex challenges ahead. In order to change the culture, the Army must consider the potential benefits of modifying current policy in order to

eventually influence behavior. Initiatives such as a new CCC curriculum, universal resident ILE and solidifying the importance of school by making each school a prerequisite to promotion for the next grade show promise for improving officer PME. These changes can significantly improve the impact of PME on the Army's strategic reserve of the future. The officers in the force deserve the education and, most importantly, the soldiers deserve the most competent leadership possible.

### Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> Russel F. Weigley, *History of the United States Army* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1984), 105.

<sup>2</sup> Based on the sum of 6 months BOLC, 6 months CCC, 10 months ILE and 10 months SSC.

<sup>3</sup> Kelly C. Jordan, *The Yin and Yang of Junior Officer Learning: The Historical Development of the Army's Institutional Education Program for Captains* (Arlington, VA: The Association of the United States Army, 2004), 3.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., 4.

<sup>5</sup> Weigley, 273.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> William M. Steele and Robert P. Walters, "Training and Developing Army Leaders," *Military Review*, (July-August 2001): 4.

<sup>8</sup> Jordan, 5.

<sup>9</sup> Huba Was de Czege, "Challenge for the Future: Educating Field Grade Battle Leaders and Staff Officers" *Military Review*, (June 1984): 2.

<sup>10</sup> Jordan, 22.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., 20.

<sup>14</sup> Steele, 4.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid., 6.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid., 7.

<sup>17</sup> William M. Steele and Robert P. Walters, "Training and Developing Army Leaders," *Military Review*, (September-October 2001): 6.

<sup>18</sup> Carl H. Builder, *The Masks of War* (Baltimore, MD: The John's Hopkins University Press, 1989), 20.

<sup>19</sup> I base all of the information and conclusions in this paragraph based on two years of service in the Army Personnel Command from 2001 to 2003 as an Account Manager in the Distribution Division and a Career Manager in the Combat Arms Division. Both organizations reside in the Officer Personnel Management Directorate.

<sup>20</sup> Joseph M. Martin, "OPMD Director's Travel Brief," briefing slides, USA NTC, Fort Irwin, CA, April 2007.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

<sup>23</sup> Patrick Rice, email to the author containing officer strength information drawn from the Total Officer Personnel Management Information System (TOPMIS), 21 November 2007.

<sup>24</sup> Deborah Avant, "Losing Control of the Profession through Outsourcing?," in *The Future of the Army Profession*, proj. dir. Don M. Snider and ed. Lloyd J. Matthews (Boston: McGraw Hill Custom Publishing, 2005), 276.

<sup>25</sup> Lacquement, page 217.

<sup>26</sup> U.S. Department of the Army, *Army Training and Leader Development*, Army Regulation 350-1, (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of the Army, 3 August 2007), 52.

<sup>27</sup> U.S. Department of the Army, *Commissioned Officer Development and Career Management*, Department of the Army Pamphlet 600-3, (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of the Army, 28 December 2005), 24.

<sup>28</sup> Robert Naething, Commander, 16<sup>th</sup> Cavalry Regiment, Fort Knox, KY, telephone interview with author 15 December 2007.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid.

<sup>33</sup> GEN George W. Casey, Jr, "Command Support of Professional Education," memorandum for all Commanders and Command Sergeants Major, Washington, D.C., 17 October 2007.

<sup>34</sup> Jerry Baird, Chief Officer Schools Branch, Leadership and Development Division, Officer Personnel Management Directorate, United States Army Human Resources Command, e-mail message to author, 11 November 2007.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid.

<sup>36</sup> Charles Ware, SME Officer Education, DA G3, telephone interview with the author, 19 December 2007.

<sup>37</sup> Baird.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid.

<sup>39</sup> Ware.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid.

<sup>42</sup> John. F Kendall, Deputy Division Chief, Leadership and Development Division, Officer Personnel Management Directorate, United States Army Human Resources Command, e-mail message to author, 21 December 2007.

<sup>43</sup> AR 350-1, 55.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid., 56.

<sup>45</sup> Casey.

<sup>46</sup> Crosswalk was completed between FY07 and FY08 Battalion Command Board instructions as well as the FY06, FY07 and FY08 Major Army and Lieutenant Colonel Army Promotion Board instructions.

<sup>47</sup> "The goal of the OES is to produce a corps of leaders who are fully competent in technical, tactical, and leadership skills, knowledge, and experience; are knowledgeable of how the Army runs; are prepared to operate in a joint, integrated and multinational environments; demonstrate confidence, integrity, critical judgment, and responsibility; can operate in an environment of complexity, ambiguity, and rapid change; can build effective teams amid organizational and technological change; and can adapt to and solve problems creatively." Previously quoted from AR 350-1.

<sup>48</sup> Dwight Eisenhower, "Opening Exercises Address," address, Armed Forces Staff College, Norfolk, VA, 2 February 1948, original author is deceased, this address is from the archives of the Armed Forces Staff College.

<sup>49</sup> Department of the Army G37/TR, "Army Training and Leadership Development Strategy, Update for the Training and Leadership General Officer Steering Committee-pre-decisional," briefing slides, Washington, D.C., as of 30 November 2007.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid., 9.



<sup>51</sup> Ibid. 10.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid. 15.

<sup>53</sup> The author takes only partial credit for the thought of changing the length of the CCC curriculum because the idea to expand the course evolved during the author's telephonic conversation with COL Robert Naething who is cited on multiple occasions in this paper. However, the details of the curriculum and the rationale for adopting it are the ideas of the author and were developed after the end of the telephone interview.

<sup>54</sup> Pete Geren, "Instructions for the Fiscal Year 2007, Major, Army, (MFE, OS, FS) Promotion Selection Boards," memorandum for President and Board Members, Fiscal Year 2007, Major, Army, (Maneuver, Fires and Effects (MFE), Operations Support (OS), Force Sustainment (FS), promotion selections boards, Washington, D.C., 28 March 2007.

<sup>55</sup> Was de Czege, 2.